



Ontario
Ministry of
Labour

Women's
Bureau

A Blueprint
for Employers:

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Women

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in the

workplace



Foreword



In the past two decades there has been a dramatic increase in the number of women working outside the home. In Ontario, almost 1.9 million women are now in the paid labour force and there is every indication that this trend will continue.

The changing role of women in the workplace is one of the major challenges and opportunities facing business today. There are signs that new work patterns are emerging, that more options are becoming available and that outdated attitudes are being challenged as women move ahead into what has been traditionally considered 'men's work'.

The object of this publication is to inform senior management of current developments in the labour force and how these are likely to affect their organizations. The booklet presents an overview of major issues concerning women in the workplace. It focuses on the position enlightened management can take in the realization that some changes in the status of women in the workplace are not only essential but inevitable. These changes are necessary to right some of the wrongs that still exist and to enable the organization to grow and profit by the better use of the talents of all of its employees.

Labour participation

of women in the 1980s

The labour force participation rate of women shows no indication of slowing down. In 1981, the participation rate for Ontario women was 55.6 per cent. The seasonally-adjusted figure for Ontario in July 1982, shows 55.9 per cent of women in the labour force.

Until recently, economists have experienced difficulty in predicting the labour force activity of women. In February 1978, federal economists predicted a female participation rate for Canada of 48.9 per cent by 1986 — a figure attained, in fact, less than one year after the prediction was made.

The C.D. Howe Institute's annual policy review and outlook for 1979, *Anticipating the Unexpected*, predicted increased labour force participation of women in the future, basing their calculations on two major factors.

"First, the monthly Labour Force survey indicates that female participation rates have continued to increase at an accelerating rate. Second, analysis of the reasons for past increases in female participation rates indicates that they are associated with higher education, lower fertility rates (smaller families) and increased urbanization. For the next few years at least, all these forces will be encouraging women to enter the labour force. Moreover, the trend toward the expansion of employment in the service industry, which traditionally relies heavily on women and young men for its workforce, is a factor that has contributed to increased participation for both these groups."

force

The Bank of Montreal's monthly newsletter for April 1980 makes a similar forecast. It predicts that the percentage of women in the labour force will continue to rise, stating:

“Our calculations indicate that women may reach 45% of the workforce in 1990. By the year 2000, women could constitute almost half of the total workforce.”

Current and predicted increases in the labour force activity of women can be linked to changes in the social climate and to the economy. There are three main types of factors that help to explain the phenomenon — demographic, economic, and social.

1. Demographic Factors

- lower birth rates
- increased average age of population
- increasing urbanization
- increasing divorce rates

2. Economic Factors

- inflation
- changes in the occupational structure
- affirmative action

3. Social Factors

- education
- increased role models
- innovative work schedules
- new definitions of marriage
- research and the women's movement.

Statistical profile

Women in Ontario have always worked to provide for themselves and their families. Historical scenes depicting the work performed in the home to produce necessary goods are readily recognizable. All but forgotten in the pages of history, however, is the work women performed in clearing the land and working as cheap labour in mines and industry at the turn of the century. Women were employed in all aspects of manufacturing and heavy industry during the last World War. Today, more women have entered the paid labour force than ever before, earning the money to purchase the necessities of life and, in turn, with their additional purchasing power, keeping the wheels of our economy turning.

of working women

In 1959, there were 612,000 women working in Ontario, representing only 29.6 per cent of the adult female population. Very few married women, and even fewer of those with children, worked outside the home.

In Ontario, in 1981:*

- There were 1,883,000 women in the labour force.
- The female labour force participation rate (that is, the percentage of all women over the age of 15 who are working) was 55.6 per cent.
- 42 per cent of all workers were women.

*All statistical data are from Statistics Canada, *The Labour Force* (Catalogue 71-001) unless otherwise noted.

The participation rate of all women in the labour force has increased dramatically since the 1950s. Three points must be emphasized, however, in discussing this rise:

- **Perhaps the greatest change has been in the numbers of married women working. By 1981, 55 per cent of all married women were in the labour force.**
- **Increases in labour force participation are evident in all age groups. The most significant increase, however, is in the 25-44 age group — the chief childbearing and childrearing years. 70.1 per cent of all women in that group are working, an increase from 43 per cent in 1969.**
- **In 1975, the participation rate of women in Ontario with children under 16 was 48 per cent. By 1981, this percentage had increased to 60.4 per cent.**

Despite documented changes in labour force participation rates, the majority of women continue to be employed in very few occupational areas. In 1981, 62.2 per cent of all female workers in Canada were in clerical, sales and service jobs in contrast to 26.8 per cent of all males. Men are much more evenly distributed throughout the occupational structure. No occupational group contains more than 11.7 per cent of all male workers, whereas the clerical sector alone accounts for one-third of all women. Although 5.2 per cent of all women are in the managerial and administrative category, compared with 9.3 per cent of all men, this category includes many diverse jobs. The internal distribution of men and women within jobs is quite different. Women are found in lower paid, first level managerial and administrative positions, whereas men are in the better paid, more senior positions.

Table one

Percentage Distribution of Men and Women by Occupational Group, Canada — 1981

Occupation	% Women in Category	% Men in Category
Managerial and Administrative	5.2	9.3
Natural Sciences, Engineering and Mathematics	1.4	5.0
Social Sciences	1.7	1.2
Religion	—	.3
Teaching	5.6	2.8
Medicine and Health	8.2	1.7
Artistic, Literary and Recreational	1.5	1.5
Clerical	33.6	6.4
Sales	9.9	10.1
Service	18.7	10.3
Agriculture	2.7	5.8
Fishing, Hunting and Trapping	—	0.5
Forestry and Logging	.1	1.0
Mining and Quarrying	—	1.2
Processing	1.8	4.9
Machining	.3	4.0
Product fabricating, assembling and repairing	5.5	11.7
Construction trades	.2	10.5
Transport equipment operation	.6	5.9
Materials handling	1.3	3.7
Other crafts and Equipment operating	.6	1.6
Unclassified	1.0	0.4
All occupations	100.0	100.0

There continues to be a significant earnings differential between men and women. In part, this is a result of already documented occupational segregation. In addition, however, women's earnings are a reflection of a historical undervaluing of women's work.

Statistics Canada's annual Survey of Consumer Finances contains information on worker's earnings in Canada. Examination of the data over a period of 11 years, shows that the dollar difference in men's and women's salaries increased every year except 1977. If one looks at females' salaries as a percentage of males' salaries, however, the relationship hovered within a percentage point of 54.5 per cent until 1977 when it improved to 56.5 per cent. In 1980, there was a further improvement to 58.0 per cent. That is, for every dollar earned by a man, a woman earned 58.0 cents.

The ratio of male-female earnings remained constant across occupational groups, ranging from a high for women in clerical jobs of 64.3 per cent of their male counterparts' earnings to a low of 50.3 per cent for women in service.

Although these data are widely used as evidence of wage discrepancies, they relate to full-year workers, that is, those employed for 50-52 weeks. They do not distinguish between full-time and part-time workers. Since more women (24.1 per cent in 1981) than men (6.3 per cent in 1981) work on a part-time basis, earnings differences are distorted. In 1977, data became available for the first time on full-time workers. Data for 1979 show women's average earnings as \$11,741 and men's as \$18,537. Therefore, when only full-time workers are considered, women earned 63.3 per cent of what men earned.

A number of empirical studies of the male-female wage differential in Canada have attempted to determine what percentage of the differential is due to the sex of the worker.* All studies have found that consideration of other variables (e.g. age, job level, seniority) decreases the wage gap to a range of 10-25 per cent, that is, women earning 75-90 per cent of what men earn. In all cases, however, having taken into consideration such human capital differences, a wage gap, attributable to sex, remains.

A less widely used, but perhaps more precise, data source on earnings is the annual survey done by Labour Canada, *Wage Rates, Salaries and Hours of Labour*. This survey covers all establishments with 20 or more employees and gives median and

average earnings in selected occupations. It shows that male weekly and hourly wages still exceed those of women (with few exceptions) even given the quite specific occupational categories. The gap, however, is much narrower than it is when broad occupational classifications are used. The data also reveal that lower than average male-female wage differentials are associated with larger establishments, unionization, certain regions, and incentive pay systems.

*Ostry, S. *The Female Worker in Canada*. 1961 Census Monograph, Statistics Canada 1968.
Gunderson, M. *Male-Female Wage Differentials and the Impact of Equal Pay Legislation*, Review of Economics and Statistics, November 1975.
Holmes, R.A. *Male-Female Earnings Differentials in Canada*, Simon Fraser University, Department of Economics and Commerce, Discussion Paper 74-5-2.

Current legislation

There are two major laws that particularly affect women in the Ontario labour force: The Employment Standards Act and the Ontario Human Rights Code.* In addition to these two laws, outlined below, the Labour Relations Act, Occupational Health and Safety Act and Workmen's Compensation Act affect all workers.

1. The Employment Standards Act

The Employment Standards Act establishes minimum work standards for employees. It includes sections on:

- hours of work
- minimum wage
- public holidays
- overtime pay
- vacation pay
- equal pay
- benefit plans
- pregnancy leave
- termination

All parts of the Act apply equally to women and men. The two standards that are particularly important to women, however, are those dealing with equal pay and pregnancy leave.

The equal pay section states that unless the pay scale is based on an established system of seniority, quality or quantity of production or any other criteria not based on sex, an employer must pay the same wages to men and women doing substantially the same work — that is, work requiring substantially the same skill, effort and responsibility. The jobs to be compared must be performed in the same establishment under similar working conditions.

The pregnancy leave section ensures that if a woman has worked for an employer for at least one year and 11 weeks before the expected date of birth of a child, she is entitled to a 17-week unpaid, flexible leave of absence. The leave may start no sooner than 11 weeks before the baby is due and can end no later than 17 weeks after the birth. Following leave, a woman must be re-instated to the same position or a comparable position to the one held previously. The Employment Standards Act is enforced by the Employment Standards Branch of the ministry of labour. More information can be obtained from either the branch or the Women's Bureau. A wide range of pamphlets in English, French and other languages is available on request to employers and employees.

*Provincial employment laws cover all workers except those working in federally regulated industries such as railways, airlines, banks, shipping companies and radio and television stations. Approximately 10 per cent of workers fall under federal jurisdiction.

2. The Ontario Human Rights Code

The Code prohibits discrimination against any person with regard to employment or any term or condition of employment because of race, creed, colour, ancestry, place of origin, citizenship, ethnic origin, record of offences, family status, handicap, sex, marital status or age (from 18-65 years). It is also illegal to discriminate against any person with regard to membership in a trade union, trade or occupational association or self-governing profession on any of these grounds (except record of offences). Employers and employment agencies may not use signs, advertisements or application forms that discriminate on these grounds.

It is also illegal under the Code to classify a job as 'male' or 'female' or to maintain separate seniority lists based on sex or marital status.

The Code is enforced by the Ontario Human Rights Commission. If the sex, age or marital status of an employee is considered a bona fide occupational qualification, an employer can apply to the Ontario Human Rights Commission for consideration of an exemption from this section.

Further information is available directly from the commission or from the Women's Bureau.

Affirmative action

Affirmative Action refers to a program or series of activities that are undertaken by an employer in order to identify and correct discriminatory practices within the organization.

Most employers believe that discrimination does not exist within their organization, that any qualified woman can apply for any job and be paid according to merit. And yet, when employee data are analysed according to factors such as job classification and pay, the effects of discrimination within the system are almost always apparent. Women are generally clustered in clearly defined areas that are found at the low end of the pay scale.

Although such discrimination is not usually intentional, it does exist as part of a system that has evolved from a time when discrimination was allowed and considered acceptable.

for women employees

Systemic discrimination can operate through longstanding personnel policies and procedures that deny equal opportunity to women in terms of admission, training, advancement and, ultimately, pay.

For example, if very few or no women have been hired for jobs other than those considered to be “women’s work”, it may be due to biased hiring procedures, including recruitment and interviewing. Women may be automatically overlooked for jobs that are heavy or dirty or require travel. Assumptions may be made that a prospective employee who happens to be a woman is incapable of, or uninterested in, a particular job or type of work. Qualifications may be requested that do not match actual job requirements. Also, while men are often hired on the basis of their potential for moving ahead, women are often expected to have proven themselves — and proven well.

Once these problem areas are identified, the employer may undertake the following affirmative action activities as corrective measures:

- **awareness sessions for all of those involved in the hiring process, to dispel stereotypes**
- **inclusion of both men and women on recruitment and hiring committees after ensuring that all are familiar with the issues**
- **job advertisements that specifically invite both men and women to apply.**

Similar affirmative action procedures of problem identification and correction are applied with regard to the status of women already employed within an organization. The absence of women at higher levels of management and in various areas and departments can often be related to bias in training, career development and promotional policies. The effects of past discrimination can be reduced through various training and catch-up measures.

The term affirmative action is often misunderstood. For instance, it does not refer to reverse discrimination, but means instead the commitment by senior management to a program designed to recruit, hire, train, develop and promote women so that they have access to jobs that have, until now, been inaccessible. It means the effective application of all human resources

Nor does affirmative action imply mandatory quotas, which could result in the placement of underqualified women simply to fill numerical requirements. Neither the women nor the organization can benefit from this approach. Instead, as in any other corporate project, realistic goals and timetables are essential if the program is to be managed effectively.

The term affirmative action is often confused with equal opportunity; they are not the same. Affirmative action refers to the procedure that makes equal opportunity possible.

Guidelines for the Implementation of an Affirmative Action Plan

1. Ensure that there is a senior management commitment, and that all employees are aware of it.
2. Appoint a person with senior reporting status to promote, conduct and monitor the program.
3. Integrate the affirmative action program into the management accountability system.
4. Accumulate and analyse data to establish the status of women within the organization — i.e. position, age, qualifications, length of service, pay, etc.
5. Set goals and timetables for the achievement of all aspects of the program.
6. Examine personnel policies and procedures to detect bias in recruitment, training, development and promotion.
7. Implement remedies for identified problem areas. Strategies might include the active recruitment of women, provision of awareness sessions for both management and women employees, identification of high potential women, implementation of fast track programs, job enrichment, job rotation, job bridging, etc.
8. Ensure that women employees are aware of available jobs, and encourage them to apply.
9. Establish a monitoring system to measure progress.
10. Contact the Women's Bureau Affirmative Action Consulting Service, Ontario Ministry of Labour for free and confidential assistance in establishing an affirmative action program in your organization.

Child care

As increasing numbers of households are composed either of families with two parents, both of whom are in the labour force, or single working parents, there has been growing pressure for day care services. About 11 per cent of all families include only one parent and 83 per cent of these families are headed by women.

Women in the Ontario Labour Force, 1981

	No. of Women	Participa- tion Rate
With child under 3 years	158,000	49.5%
With child 3 – 5 years	116,000	58.3%

In 1981, 49.5 per cent of women in Ontario with a child under 3 years of age were in the labour force; 58.3 per cent of women with a child between 3 and 5 years were working. In other words, half of the families in Ontario with children under 6 had need of some form of child care.

Attention has recently been focused on the role that business and industry might play with respect to child care. Some employers are realizing that they can benefit substantially by making facilities available for the children of their employees. Such benefits can include higher morale and productivity and lower absenteeism and turnover rates.

The options available to an employer interested in workplace child care are numerous. If you decide to develop your own centre, choices include:

- **a non-profit employer-sponsored centre functioning separately from the company.**
- **a centre operating as a proprietary subsidiary of the company**
- **a joint project with other employers to co-sponsor a centre.**
- **a joint project with a union or community group to co-sponsor a centre.**

Not all employers will find it feasible to set up their own centre even on a co-sponsorship basis. Other options that would demonstrate your commitment to this area are:

- **purchasing spaces for employee use in existing centres near your establishment**
- **providing cash vouchers to employees toward the purchase of child care services**
- **initiating a company-sponsored day care counselling and referral service**
- **donating organizational training or administrative expertise to an existing centre, e.g. accounting services**
- **donating space, maintenance service or utilities to an existing centre.**

The Women's Bureau has produced a background paper on industrial/workplace child care to assist employers in examining this concept. The paper includes guidelines for interested employers and unions.

Women in the skilled trades technology

Ontario employers are expressing concern about a shortage of workers in the skilled trades — a shortage that exists in the face of high rates of unemployment.

The problem is that there is a mismatch between the kinds of skill requirements that are in demand and the kind of expertise that is available. The Ontario labour force will have to be trained and re-trained in order to meet the demand. At the present time, over 42 per cent of this labour force is female. Thousands of these women are ready and able to learn the skills required by the trades and by occupations in technology.

While government training programs are being designed in an effort to meet the training needs of the economy, there is, as well, a growing recognition among employers that industry has a responsibility to participate and assist in the provision of necessary training. Employers who are keen to attract the best candidates and new business will become involved in training. When recruiting trainees, they will give equal consideration to the 1.9 million working women in Ontario.

and

The Myths

Old attitudes die hard, especially those that hold that women should not, cannot, and will not perform jobs usually considered to be men's work. These attitudes, however, are unsubstantiated in fact:

- **The “should not” is totally contrary to Ontario’s basic human rights legislation that adopts as public policy everyone’s right to employment regardless of race, creed, country of origin, marital status, or sex.**
- **The “cannot” is denied by history. Women vigorously demonstrated their capabilities during World War II by keeping the factories in operation. Today, there are many examples of women’s able performance as truck drivers, crane operators, and fine instrument technologists.**
- **Finally, many women do want these jobs. The mining, manufacturing and construction jobs may be dirty, hazardous and physically demanding, but, for many, they are also challenging, fulfilling and well paying. The “will not” argument crumbles under the weight of the thousands of applications received from women for jobs advertised by refining and manufacturing companies.**

Guidelines

1. Consider women for all occupations. Women form a valuable labour pool that must be tapped in order to avoid the predicted shortage of skilled labour.
2. Consider the job to be done and the interest, abilities, and skills being offered; make the match on this basis not on the basis of sex.
3. Assume a prospective female employee can do the job or can be trained to do the job; do not assume she cannot because she is a woman.
4. Examine your machinery and equipment to determine any modifications that are necessary to facilitate the performance of a particular job by a woman. Many employers have discovered that such changes are often of benefit to all employees and to the company as a whole.
5. Review any age or physical specifications that are explicitly or implicitly attached to particular jobs. They may no longer be appropriate and could serve to discriminate against women (as well as against members of various ethnic groups).
6. Make it clear to all employees that there is active support from top level management for the inclusion of women in all jobs.
7. Solicit the support and co-operation of a union if one is present in your organization.

Job evaluation

There is clear evidence that the work performed by women in our society is often undervalued. In the past, this practice was rarely questioned. Before the establishment of Ontario's equal pay legislation in 1951, an employer could pay a woman less than a man for doing the same or similar work. It was generally believed that women did not need as much money as men, and that they were, after all, secondary wage earners. These beliefs are difficult to dispel. Echoes still linger of the old phrase "she makes good money for a woman." Whether or not that is said out loud any more, the wage gap remains. Women's jobs are consistently ranked and rated at the low end of the scale.

Comparison of data on jobs held by men and women in terms of classification and pay — or a general observation of who is doing what and for how much — reveals both the serious occupational segregation of the workforce according to sex, and the disparity in compensation paid to men and women.

The fact that the majority of working women are clustered in a narrow range of occupations, often performing what are considered low level, repetitive jobs at the low end of the pay scale, can be attributed to a variety of social factors. However, the fact that the jobs are consistently considered to be low level and worth relatively low pay can be related, as well, to the built-in bias of accepted and common job evaluation systems.

There are four conventional methods of job evaluation systems in common use: ranking, classification, factor-comparison and points-rating. These systems employ a variety of procedures to determine the rates of compensation for all jobs within an organization. Generally, jobs are analysed and evaluated in terms of their relative degree of difficulty and importance within the organization; pay rates are then established on the basis of appropriate levels for the organization, and according to the rates paid for similar jobs elsewhere.

Various aspects of all systems used to analyse, evaluate and rate those jobs predominantly and historically held by women can be perceived as biased and discriminatory. For example, most of those people involved with devising pay structures for "women's jobs" may have little understanding of, or direct experience with, the work. These jobs may then be undervalued if decision-makers hold traditional views of women and overlook the importance of the skills required.

Bias can also operate within job evaluation systems through the following conditions:

- **Jobs done by women are often perceived to have low social status and can, therefore, be given little importance. For example, in our society, the position of secretary is not considered as valuable as that of plant foreman, manager, computer analyst or sales representative.**

- **Many factors determining pay are based on “men’s jobs”, and are weighted accordingly, with little recognition or value given to “women’s jobs”. Sometimes, some aspects are overlooked completely. For example:**
 - Common components of work usually done by women, such as manual dexterity, accuracy and speed can be undervalued in relation to factors usually involved with men’s work, such as physical effort.
 - The physical effort demanded by many jobs performed by women, such as lifting office materials, library books, small children and bed-ridden patients, are often discounted.
 - Social skills, a common aspect of “women’s work”, receive little recognition. These same skills, when held by managers may be well compensated.
 - Jobs that require on-the-job training, e.g. skilled trade jobs, are often perceived to be more valuable than jobs for which incumbents have been trained prior to hiring, e.g. typing.
- **Responsibility is generally weighted heavily when it applies to men’s jobs involving equipment, and/or profit and productivity, but not when related to jobs traditionally done by women.**
- **When more than one system is implemented, different types of work (often men’s and women’s) may be evaluated and rated according to different criteria, resulting in lower pay for women.**
- **When job rating systems denote the sex or the name of the incumbent, traditional perceptions of women may negatively influence pay.**

Regardless of which job evaluation system is used, the personal beliefs of those involved can have a major impact on the compensation received by women. But while it may be impossible to eliminate subjectivity from all job evaluation systems, the effects can be minimized.

Guidelines for the Reduction of Bias in Job Evaluation Systems

1. Ensure that those associated with the analysis and evaluation of jobs are aware of and understand the issues concerning women's jobs and the possible discriminatory aspects of systems.
2. Ensure that the actual job content is analysed and evaluated, and not the person doing the job.
3. Conduct comprehensive and structured job analyses to screen factors, job families and benchmarks in terms of discriminatory aspects.
4. Ensure that factors associated with work usually done by women, such as manual dexterity, accuracy, continuous routine and concentration are weighted on a comparable basis with factors associated with jobs usually done by men.
5. Discuss all aspects of work usually done by women with incumbents to determine previously unrecognized or undervalued factors, such as physical and mental effort and skill, responsibility and varied working conditions.
6. Ensure that where more than one evaluation system is established for different types of jobs, discriminatory aspects are not present.
7. Maintain records of job analyses, the definition and weighting of factors, the scores for each job and the reasons for rating decisions.
8. Inform all involved employees of job evaluation procedures.

Sexual harassment

What is it?

Sexual harassment may be defined as any sexual comments, looks, suggestions or physical contact that a woman finds objectionable or offensive, causes her discomfort on the job, undermines her job performance or threatens her economic livelihood.

Although by no means a recent phenomenon, sexual harassment is a relatively new concern for managers because, until recently, the topic was rarely discussed. And when it was discussed, it was often the cause of office humour.

But there is nothing funny about sexual harassment. For the victim, it is humiliating and destructive; for the employer, it can mean decreased productivity and increased turnover costs.

As women begin to discuss sexual harassment openly and to make complaints to the Human Rights Commission, indications are that it is more widespread than most of us care to believe.

According to a number of surveys, anywhere from 70 to 88 per cent of working women have been victims of some form of sexual harassment at least once during their working careers. Sexual harassment shows no preference for age, appearance or occupation. In some occupations, such as that of waitress or secretary, it may occur frequently. For women in other occupations, sexual harassment may take on a subtle character but it is no less threatening.

The problem is exacerbated by the narrow range of responses available to women. Often a woman who complains of sexual harassment is considered to have “no sense of humour” or to have “asked for it”— or to have “something wrong with her.”

Sexual harassment is any sexually-oriented practice which undermines a woman's ability to perform her job and threatens (directly or indirectly) her economic livelihood.

The Ontario Human Rights Code prohibits sexual harassment. The Code states that every person has the right to be free from*:

- **harassment** in the workplace by the employer, agent of the employer or by a co-worker. Examples of this type of behaviour are unwelcome sexual remarks or physical contact.**
- **a sexual solicitation or advance by a person who could confer, grant or deny a benefit or advancement and who knows or should know that such behaviour is unwelcome. Advances from a supervisor to an employee or from a professor to a student are examples of this kind of behaviour.**
- **a reprisal or threat of reprisal for the rejection of a sexual solicitation or advance.**

* Source: Ontario Human Rights Commission.
A Guide to the Human Rights Code, 1981.

** 'Harassment' is defined as a 'course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome.'

A person who has the authority to prevent or discourage harassment may be considered responsible for failing to exercise his or her authority to do so.

In order to prevent the occurrence of sexual harassment in your establishment, consider taking any or all of the following steps:

1. Issue and post a statement/policy directive prohibiting the practice of sexual harassment on the job. If your company has a journal or newsletter, use it to clarify your company's policy. Or develop an informative brochure for the benefit of employees and managers alike.

2. Sponsor seminars and workshops for managers and supervisors to inform them of the seriousness of the issue and the effect of its implications on your company.

3. Sponsor seminars for employees to inform them of the company's policy in this area.

4. Provide a means of investigating incidents and establish internal disciplinary measures. Ensure that women employees are aware of the complaint route available to them.

5. Consider the appointment of a management person from within the organization who has an understanding of, and is sensitive to, such problems, with whom incidents of sexual harassment may be discussed in strictest confidence.

6. If your company has a union, explore the possibility of labour-management meetings where the issue of sexual harassment may be dealt with on an informal and confidential basis.

Remember that guilt also exists in omission. Work environments in which sexual harassment is sanctioned or ignored are not the most conducive to high morale and productivity. It is good management practice to have a strong policy against sexual harassment.

Career development

Women are disproportionately employed in lower level positions and within a narrow range of occupations that often fail to make full use of their talents and potential. This employment pattern creates a clustering of female workers at the lower end of the pay scale and limits career choices and mobility for women at all levels. For some women, these jobs are fulfilling and meet their needs and expectations; for others, they can be boring or frustrating, and result in low levels of job satisfaction.

In an effort to turn this situation around, employers are undertaking career development programs. These programs can be described as a systematic management effort aimed at providing the conditions necessary for the full realization of an employee's interests, skills, and talent.

Given the basic assumption that all organizations wish to meet their goals successfully and be as productive as possible, it follows that employers will seek to develop the actual and potential skills of all their

employees. Traditionally, however, women have not been given the same career development opportunities as their male co-workers. When considering their degree of commitment to, and their financial investment in, an employee, most organizations view male and female employees differently. Hiring, job training, transfers and promotions are time-consuming and costly undertakings. Due to misconceptions about the role of women in the labour force, employers have not been willing to invest equally in their male and female employees.

This unequal treatment, however, can, in itself, be costly and wasteful. Many women workers are keen to move into new job areas that will offer them a challenge. To prevent them from doing so can be counter-productive, and could lead to a lack of motivation. Employers are recognizing that motivation and job satisfaction are important elements of productivity, and can have a significant effect on rates of turnover and absenteeism. They realize that job satisfaction is seriously inhibited when employees are not

permitted to work to their potential, when they lack authority and control over their work and when there is little chance of advancement or recognition of their achievements.

Women workers are a human resource that is growing rapidly. Managers who recognize and tap this resource will create organizations that are better equipped to meet their objectives.

A variety of career development techniques and programs is available. In many instances they provide the means not only for upward mobility, but for lateral moves into different job fields. Depending on their requirements, organizations may choose to develop the following:

- **On-the-job training programs, perhaps supplemented by external courses (which may be subsidized).**

- **Bridging positions created as a link between lower and higher level positions. Such positions might not be readily attainable by lower level employees without additional formal education or substantially related experience. This technique is of particular benefit to female employees clustered in clerical services. It clearly identifies the essential core requirements of a job and results in the identification and removal of non-essential barriers to women's career advancement.**
- **Career rotation programs that assign employees to other jobs for a specified period of time in order to expose them to different departments or units and to different activities, problems, and solutions. These job changes enable employees at all levels to broaden their experience and develop their skills. The organization benefits from the reduced need for continual external recruitment as the program will create a pool of employees with a wider range of skills.**

- **Job enrichment procedures that restructure a job to allow for more control, more decision-making authority, and greater personal responsibility, thereby providing greater job satisfaction and improved productivity.**

Complementary to these activities could be the establishment of a permanent career counselling unit that would offer individual testing and interviews, group workshops, and the planning of personal career programs.

Whatever program is undertaken, however, it is important to realize that special efforts must be made to ensure that female employees take advantage of them. Active recruitment practices that specifically target women are necessary. It is not enough to assume that a program that is open to all employees and does not discriminate will result in full representation from

women. Years of explicit or implicit discouragement, a history of ignoring and undervaluing the jobs performed by women, and the tendency to view these jobs as starting and finishing points for the job-holder, must all be overcome by an active policy oriented toward achieving significant participation by women in all jobs, at all levels.

Guidelines

1. Examine the process by which individual employees develop their skills. Evaluate the manner in which your organization participates in this development.
2. Review the process by which training programs are brought to the attention of employees.
3. Examine the validity of training eligibility requirements.
4. Analyse the procedures used to nominate candidates for training.
5. Ensure that female employees are regularly interviewed to determine their training and development needs.
6. Ascertain how often qualified women participate in management development initiatives such as job rotation, special assignments, task forces and committees.
7. Ensure that women are afforded the same potential career paths as men.
8. Make sure that women are included in long-term human resources planning.
9. Ensure that systems used to identify qualified women employees for promotion are capable of crossing departmental lines as well as occupational streams.
10. Institute an in-house appeal procedure for employees who feel that the career development procedures being used are discriminatory.
11. Examine the feasibility of creating bridging jobs to assist women employees to move into other positions for which their present duties and responsibilities would not qualify them.
12. Determine the areas in which jobs could be enriched; meet with your female employees individually to discuss how their function within the organization can best be improved.
13. Develop an on-the-job training program for employees who wish to move into new or advanced positions. If beneficial for both the employer and the employee, supplement such a program with external courses. These courses may be subsidized.

Is it good business

to assume that:

- women work only for frills and are secondary wage earners?
- your male employees will not work for a woman boss?
- you cannot hire a young woman for a responsible or trainee position because she will only leave to raise a family?
- the rates of turnover and absenteeism are higher for women than for men?
- women are not interested in, or able to do, heavy or dirty jobs?
- women are suited for a limited range of occupations?
- sexual harassment either does not exist within your organization, or, if it does, it is a frivolous issue, and not really your concern?
- you are providing equal opportunity for all employees?

When

it has been proven

that:

— women work for the same reasons as men — that is, financial need and personal fulfilment.

— most employees say that the sex of their supervisor or manager is irrelevant.

— increasing numbers of women are combining a career with family life.

— the determining factor is job level rather than the sex of the employee.

— given the opportunity, many women are eager to train for work in such areas.

— neither men nor women as a group possess inherent traits which equip them for particular types of work.

— sexual harassment is often a hidden but costly problem.

— employers who undertake a workforce analysis discover some form of discrimination.



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